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ABSTRACT

This program, included in "Effective Reading Programs...," serves about 5,950 first, second, and third graders from 33 schools. The program hopes to significantly diminish reading problems in its children by offering three years of intensive diagnostic reading instruction for 90 minutes a day during their first three years of school. The reading consultants spend each morning at their assigned school working with children and providing continuous inservice training for the teachers. They instruct teachers in how to use both formal and informal diagnostic testing instruments, how to determine which reader or reading approach will be most successful with each child, and how to group children according to their ability level and interest area. Reading instruction is highly individualized, and the teachers continually evaluate the reading progress of individual students and make appropriate adjustments in each student's reading program. Teachers also use a district-prepared reading guide which is periodically revised and which contains additional information on various ways to use different materials to teach certain skills. In addition, almost 130 parent tutors volunteer each semester in the classrooms and work with children on a one-to-one basis. (WR)

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CORPUS CHRISTI INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
Corpus Christi, Texas

# THE READING EMPHASIS PROGRAM

## RATIONALE

When the United States Commissioner of Education, Dr. James E. Allen, launched a national right-to-read effort in 1969, he established as the nation's first priority, the goal that by the end of the 1970's no student would leave school without the skill and desire necessary to read to the full limits of his capability. This goal was realistic and timely because the United States Office of Education had published statistics which, in part, said that:

- one of four students nationwide had significant reading deficiencies
- there were more than three million illiterates in the nation's adult population
- about half of the unemployed youth, ages 16-21, were functionally illiterate
- three-fourths of the juvenile offenders in large cities were two or more years retarded in reading

The United States Office of Education, the Educational Resources Information Center, the University of Indiana, and the International Reading Association, studied the problem and suggested some reasons for the national lack of reading achievement. Among those reasons are

- more complex psychological problems
- more distractions
- less compulsion to learn
- insufficient funds

These agencies did not discover research which provided conclusive data as to why some children learn and others do not, or why some materials are better in some situations than others, or what skills interact to change a non-reader into an enthusiastic competent one; but they reached certain conclusions. These major conclusions may be found in the report, "Putting Research into Educational Practice."

- The classroom teacher is the single most important factor in reading achievement.
- Diagnostic teaching is an essential component of successful teaching of reading.
- Existing methods and materials all work well with some children, but not for all children.
- Teachers should be enthusiastic and skilled in reading methodology.

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Frank Guzak concurs with these conclusions in his book Diagnostic Reading Instruction in the Elementary School. He states that the specially trained reading teacher--one skilled in diagnostic processes--is the major factor in preventing reading failure. He suggests that when diagnosis is considered to be a "specialist" function, it becomes separated from the domain of the classroom teacher. Diagnosis becomes severed from implementation of diagnostic prescriptions. Confusion results and minor weaknesses can escalate into major disabilities. Evelyn Jan-Tausch warned the International Reading Association in 1971 that "diagnosis at the 'teaching' level is desperately needed if this situation is ever to be corrected."

As Corpus Christi planned a local right-to-read effort, these conclusions were used as guidelines. While the national statistics compiled by the United States Office of Education on reading achievement did not reflect the exact condition in Corpus Christi, there were some similarities. As in most urban areas, pupils in Corpus Christi schools were not achieving satisfactorily in the basic skill area of reading. Standardized achievement test results indicated that at the end of each successive year of schooling, elementary pupils were, on the average, falling farther and farther below national norms. In some schools, by the end of the sixth grade, this deficit had grown to two or three years.

The ramifications of students who do not learn to read are many. Certainly, it produces a situation that, for many, contributes to the conditions of poverty, unemployment, and alienation. It was to the alleviation and elimination of this problem that the right-to-read plan of the Corpus Christi Independent School District was addressed.

PLAN

A reading emphasis program was formulated and implemented in the fall of 1970 in selected elementary schools and was designed to alleviate the aforementioned problem as well as to address itself to one of the instructional five-year goals as outlined by the superintendent--to make a concentrated effort to improve reading. The program was designed to place major emphasis on the diagnostic teaching of beginning reading.

Organizationally, this program was initiated by selecting eleven elementary schools which represented a cross-section of the city. An attempt was made to get schools representing low, middle, and high socioeconomic levels. Structurally, the schools ranged from those having modified open-space areas to those containing traditional self-contained classrooms.

Operationally, the program design was to assign a reading consultant to each of the schools. The task of this consultant was to function as a teaching team leader, to plan cooperatively with the teachers and principal of their school, and to devise a strategy of beginning reading that would best meet the needs of the children in that school. The consultant remained in the school all morning. A budget was made available so that after diagnosis, materials could be furnished to fulfill instructional requirements.

In each case, a specific reading program was established. The consultant and teachers continually assessed the progress of their students, and redesigned the program as the need arose. Each team formulated expectations for each student, and strove to see that these expectations were met.

The plan, therefore, was different in each school. The constant was that each school had a consultant, with a special budget, to teach and to lead the other teachers in a team effort to improve the reading skills of the students.

The first grade was chosen as the level of concentrated effort because of a recognition that reading scores at this level had not been as high as was anticipated, and because of the importance of beginning reading skills which provide cornerstones on which later skills are built.

## HYPOTHESES

A number of hypotheses were developed that would be proved or disproved as a result of the Reading Emphasis Program. While it was recognized that definitive answers could not be provided at the conclusion of a single year, it was hoped that insight into the complexity of beginning reading could be provided as well as direction for continuance of the program. The hypotheses were:

- Eighty percent of the children in the Reading Emphasis Program would achieve in reading on or above the predetermined level of expectancy for each child.

- The classrooms in the program would have a significantly higher percentage of students reaching or exceeding the reading expectancy level than would an equal number of students not in the program.

- Classrooms in the program would have a significantly higher percentage of students reaching or exceeding the reading expectancy level than students in these same classrooms the previous year.

- The average grade level equivalency score of all students in the program would be a grade level--1.80.

- The grade level equivalency scores of students in the program would be significantly higher than those achieved by the students in the control group.

- Gain scores in reading achievement would be significantly higher for students in the program than those achieved by students in the control group.

The data which provided the means to prove or disprove these hypotheses is presented in a later section of this report.

## PROCEDURES

In order to examine these hypotheses, a number of procedural requirements were evident. A control group needed for purposes of comparison had to be established; a program of inservice had to be considered, both for consultants lacking specific skills in the teaching of reading, and for the teachers in the program; the reading programs had to be considered and selected; and instruments had to be selected and administered. This section of the report will describe the procedures used for each of these requirements.

### Control Group

The evaluator of the program and the Director of Elementary Education determined eleven elementary schools which would serve as control schools. The basis for selection was the general socioeconomic level of the schools and past reading achievement scores. The schools forming the control group were equal to the experimental group in socioeconomic make-up--that is, there were four schools classified as low, three on the low-middle range, and four classified as middle and upper-middle in a socio-economic continuum. The reading achievement scores of these control schools were slightly higher than the experimental schools for the previous school year--an average of 1.56 as compared to 1.46. While this provided a slight bias in favor of the control group, it was the best that could be done if socioeconomic classifications were to be kept equal. An additional check on the comparability of the groups was possible after the district-wide readiness tests were administered late in September, 1971. The experimental group had an average raw score of 51.9, while the control group had an average raw score of 51.4. The differences were not significant so that groups were judged approximately equal. Since pre and post tests were to be used in both groups, the controls as selected should serve as an appropriate comparison group.

### Consultants

The district did not have eleven consultants skilled in the area of beginning reading. So that enough would be available, seven consultants from other subject-matter areas were selected to become experts in reading to go along with the four already on the staff. These additional consultants were considered master teachers already, and had a good foundation in teaching pedagogy. A program of inservice was developed to provide the missing skills. This was conducted by the language arts coordinator with assistance from the Texas Education Agency and representatives from major book publishers. The inservice was extensive before the beginning of services to the schools, and was continued throughout the school year, including the teachers as well as the consultants.

### The Reading Programs

The teaching teams at each of the experimental schools were encouraged to purchase additional materials and an extra total reading program if they felt it would assist them in the teaching process. Various approaches to beginning reading were used in the programs.

- the state-adopted reading programs at the primary level stressed the teaching of the basic reading skills through a controlled vocabulary, an eclectic word analysis skills program, and emphasis on comprehension, critical thinking, and study skills. Reading was viewed as a meaningful process, not just word recognition.

- A systematic-phonics program presented letter recognition and the sounds the letters represented before beginning reading. The child was taught to synthesize word elements into whole words.

- Another systematic-phonics programs presented the names of letters of the alphabet, then proceeded to controlled spelling patterns found in words. The assumption of these programs is that children learn to pronounce whole words on sight as they learn to speak--by listening, watching, and practicing. No isolated letter sounds are practiced.

- A language approach to reading was used which was designed for children not responding to the typical basal reading series. This program attempted to build language and concepts before introducing reading skills. Multi-sensory resource materials were available to help a child proceed at his own rate of speed.

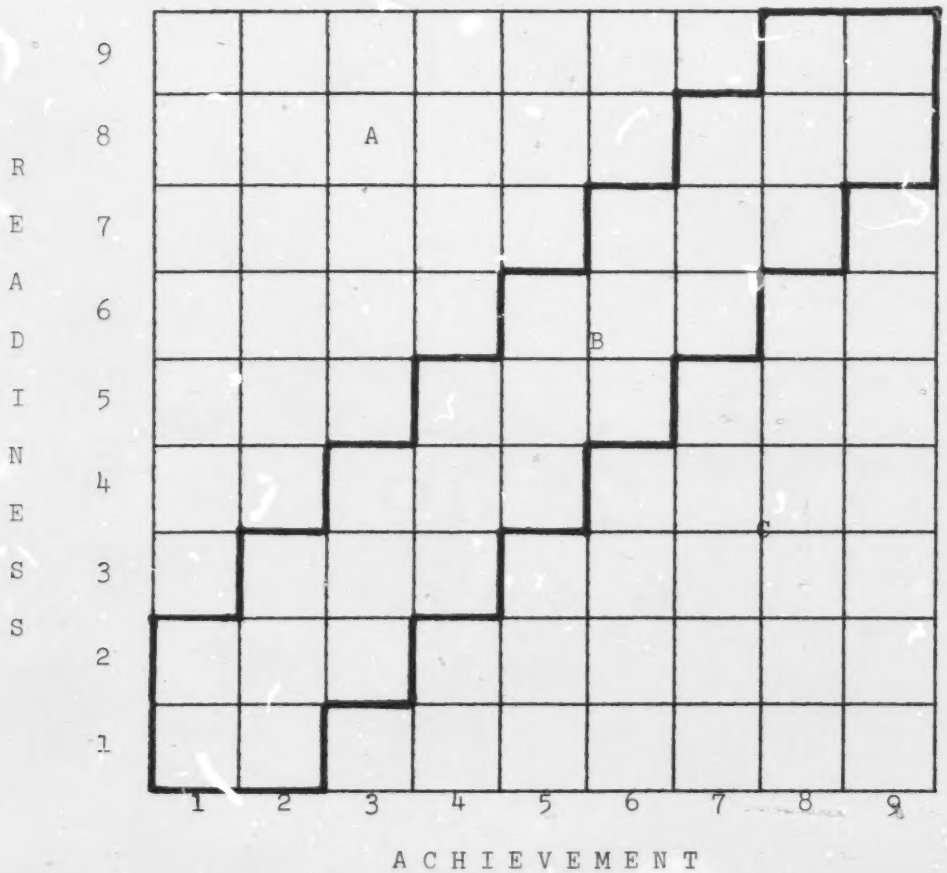
Instruments

The Metropolitan Readiness Test, Form A, was administered by classroom teachers in September as a part of the regular testing program of the district. The scores were used to provide base line data which was used to develop expectancy levels for each child, to provide diagnostic information, and to equate the control group.

The reading and arithmetic tests published by Science Research Associates (SRA) was used for achievement measurement. They were administered to all first grade students in the district, including those children in the experimental and control groups.

## Expectancy Charts

To establish expectancy levels for each child, a matrix was devised, using the readiness and achievement scores, in this manner:




The vertical axis was used for readiness scores, and the horizontal axis for achievement. The unit of quantification was the stanine, a standard score using a percentile range derived by dividing the base line of a normal curve distribution. The "B" area represents expected achievement and includes one stanine above and below the stanine in which the readiness score falls. A plot which falls in "A" represents achievement significantly below expectations; and a plot in the "C" area represents achievement significantly above expectations. Each classroom in the Reading Emphasis and control schools were charted in this manner and the percentages of students plotted in each of the areas were noted. The results of these expectancy charts is presented later in this report.

PRESENTATION OF THE DATA

The primary focus of evaluation was to establish an achievement expectancy for each child with the success or failure of the program centering on the extent to which the achievement expectancy was reached. The first objective, therefore, was that 80% of the children in the Reading Emphasis Program achieve in reading on or above the predetermined level of expectancy for each child. In addition to this primary objective, two other hypotheses were formulated which related to achievement expectancy:

- The classrooms in the Reading Emphasis Program would have a significantly higher percentage of students reaching or exceeding the expectancy level than would an equal number of students not in the program.
- Classrooms in the Reading Emphasis Program would have a significantly higher percentage of students reaching or exceeding the expectancy level than did the students in these same classrooms the previous year.

Table I presents the data used to answer these hypotheses.

TABLE I

PERCENTAGE OF FIRST GRADE STUDENTS SCORING

BELOW, ON, AND ABOVE EXPECTATIONS

IN READING ACHIEVEMENT

| | Reading Emphasis Schools, 1970-71 | | | Control Schools 1970-71 | | | Reading Emphasis Schools, 1969-70 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Expectations | | | Expectations | | | Expectations | | |
| School | Below | On | Above | Below | On | Above | Below | On | Above |
| 1 | 19.7 | 66.3 | 14.0 | 16.5 | 75.8 | 7.7 | 45.6 | 50.9 | 3.5 |
| 2 | 20.7 | 64.2 | 15.1 | 5.6 | 61.1 | 33.3 | 54.5 | 41.8 | 3.7 |
| 3 | 4.2 | 43.1 | 52.8 | 21.7 | 67.4 | 10.9 | 29.3 | 63.4 | 7.3 |
| 4 | 10.3 | 67.0 | 22.7 | 20.9 | 71.6 | 7.5 | 37.7 | 60.9 | 1.4 |
| 5 | 2.9 | 79.4 | 17.6 | 46.5 | 51.2 | 2.3 | 47.8 | 52.2 | 0 |
| 6 | 17.8 | 54.8 | 27.4 | 16.4 | 67.2 | 16.4 | 33.3 | 48.3 | 1.8 |
| 7 | 14.1 | 65.2 | 20.7 | 4.4 | 73.9 | 21.7 | 68.8 | 31.2 | 0 |
| 8 | 30.1 | 56.2 | 13.7 | 17.4 | 78.3 | 4.3 | 38.8 | 57.1 | 4.1 |
| 9 | 21.5 | 67.7 | 10.8 | 29.7 | 52.7 | 17.6 | 36.8 | 63.2 | 0 |
| 10 | 4.1 | 44.7 | 51.3 | 18.7 | 65.6 | 15.7 | 39.5 | 55.8 | 4.7 |
| 11 | 3.6 | 85.7 | 10.7 | 10.8 | 72.8 | 16.4 | 8.9 | 89.3 | 1.8 |
| Group Means | 14.4 | 61.0 | 24.6 | 19.5 | 66.7 | 13.8 | 40.5 | 55.3 | 4.2 |
| % on and above | | 85.6 | | | 80.5 | | | 59.5 | |

From this data it can be seen that 85.6% of the students in the Reading Emphasis Program achieved on or above expectations. Thus the primary objective of the program, to achieve an 80% success rate, was reached.

To see if the expectancy levels for the previous year were an unusual case, an analysis was performed for the control schools to check their performance within this context. The result was similar, although not as low as reported in Table I for the Reading Emphasis Schools. It showed 34.7 percent achieving below expectations; 55.1 percent achieving on expectation; and 9.2 percent achieving above expectations. A random check on classroom achievement for the 1968-69 year revealed a similar trend to lend support to the contention that this has been the usual pattern of beginning reading achievement as it relates to readiness.

If this is so, then the school year 1970-71 was an exceptionally good one for beginning reading achievement. Even though the Reading Emphasis Schools showed a significant gain over the control schools, both groups had considerable improvement over the previous year. This was not all together unexpected since the monitoring procedures revealed considerable attention was being given by all schools in the district to reading. The control schools, however, lacked consultant help and special materials.

An analysis of variance was computed to answer the two related hypotheses with the following results: the difference between the percentage of students reaching or exceeding the expectancy level between the Reading Emphasis Program and the control group (5.1 percentage points) was significant at the .05 level of probability; and the difference between the Reading Emphasis schools in 1970-71 and those same classrooms the previous year (26.1 percentage points) was significant at the .001 level of probability. This is interpreted to mean that real differences existed between those students in Reading Emphasis and the two comparison groups, and the differences favored the Reading Emphasis Program

Grade Level Equivalencies

Another way of viewing the success or failure of the program was through grade level equivalencies. These equivalencies are a popular way of expressing gain scores, and although they are often misunderstood when used to describe school achievement, they do provide an appropriate means for measuring achievement gains from one year to the next.

Three objectives were formulated relative to grade level equivalencies. The first was to cause learning to take place to the extent that the average grade level equivalency of all students in the Reading Emphasis Program would be at grade level--this is, 1.80. The second objective was that the grade level scores of students in the program would be significantly higher than the student's scores in the control group for each of the subtests and the total reading score. The third objective was that gain scores, from 1969-70 to 1970-71 in the first grades would be significantly higher in the Reading Emphasis Schools when compared to the control schools.

Tables II, III, and IV present the data used to answer the questions related to the objectives. Table II is the grade level equivalencies for the Reading Emphasis and Control Schools for the end of the first year of the program, 1970-71. From this table, the first two objectives are answered. For three of the subtests and the total score, the objective of reaching an average grade level equivalency of 1.8 was reached. Subtest 1 (verbal-pictorial association) had an equivalency of 1.83; subtest two (language perception) was 2.25; subtest four (vocabulary) showed a score of 2.00; and the total reading score was 2.00. The third subtest, comprehension, showed an average grade level equivalency of 1.76, which was only slightly under the goal of 1.8.

TABLE II

GRADE LEVEL EQUIVALENCIES READING

ACHIEVEMENT, 1970-71

| | READING EMPHASIS SCHOOLS | | | | | CONTROL SCHOOLS | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | SUBTESTS | | | | | SUBTESTS | | | | |
| School | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | T | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | T |
| 1 | 1.90 | 2.60 | 1.71 | 2.00 | 2.13 | 1.15 | 1.36 | 1.40 | 1.53 | 1.41 |
| 2 | .75 | 1.10 | 1.40 | 1.80 | 1.25 | 1.90 | 2.23 | 1.77 | 1.94 | 2.08 |
| 3 | 1.91 | 1.84 | 1.71 | 1.93 | 1.88 | 2.15 | 2.11 | 2.60 | 2.51 | 2.31 |
| 4 | 1.86 | 2.32 | 1.87 | 2.13 | 2.04 | 1.30 | 1.51 | 1.40 | 1.80 | 1.49 |
| 5 | 1.77 | 1.78 | 1.49 | 1.94 | 1.79 | 1.14 | 1.46 | 1.87 | 2.11 | 1.56 |
| 6 | 1.68 | 2.22 | 1.58 | 1.75 | 1.89 | 1.62 | 2.07 | 1.95 | 1.84 | 1.98 |
| 7 | 1.85 | 1.85 | 1.68 | 1.93 | 1.86 | 1.13 | 1.29 | 1.45 | 1.76 | 1.36 |
| 8 | 1.49 | 1.91 | 1.59 | 1.98 | 1.79 | .84 | 1.17 | 1.23 | 1.86 | 1.23 |
| 9 | 2.34 | 3.03 | 2.28 | 2.32 | 2.54 | 2.10 | 2.57 | 1.99 | 2.07 | 2.24 |
| 10 | 2.58 | 3.23 | 2.03 | 2.34 | 2.62 | 2.11 | 2.56 | 2.03 | 2.31 | 2.28 |
| 11 | .85 | 1.10 | 1.35 | 1.40 | 1.20 | .83 | 1.14 | 1.28 | 1.61 | 1.24 |
| $\bar{X}$ | 1.83 | 2.25 | 1.76 | 2.00 | 2.00 | 1.48 | 1.77 | 1.72 | 1.94 | 1.74 |

Subtest 1 - Verbal-pictorial association
2 - Language perception
3 - Comprehension
4 - Vocabulary

TABLE III

GRADE LEVEL EQUIVALENCIES, READING

ACHIEVEMENT, 1969-70

| School | READING EMPHASIS SCHOOLS | | | | | CONTROL SCHOOLS | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | SUBTESTS | | | | | SUBTESTS | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | T | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | T |
| | 1.49 | 2.00 | 1.65 | 1.68 | 1.79 | .95 | 1.26 | 1.29 | 1.61 | 1.27 |
| 2 | .72 | .81 | 1.09 | 1.69 | .98 | 1.24 | 1.33 | 1.31 | 1.74 | 1.67 |
| 3 | .72 | .93 | 1.04 | 1.52 | 1.06 | 2.01 | 2.01 | 1.88 | 2.01 | 1.97 |
| 4 | 1.21 | 1.68 | 1.35 | 1.88 | 1.58 | 1.29 | 1.60 | 1.44 | 1.61 | 1.52 |
| 5 | 1.28 | 1.46 | 1.56 | 1.94 | 1.51 | .77 | 1.07 | 1.15 | 1.68 | 1.18 |
| 6 | 1.34 | 1.52 | 1.43 | 1.87 | 1.55 | 1.25 | 1.50 | 2.14 | 1.98 | 1.69 |
| 7 | 1.13 | 1.11 | 1.55 | 1.92 | 1.35 | 1.02 | 1.19 | 1.48 | 1.72 | 1.29 |
| 8 | 1.17 | 1.45 | 1.35 | 1.36 | 1.48 | .88 | 1.20 | 1.35 | 1.54 | 1.27 |
| 9 | 1.76 | 2.48 | 1.77 | 1.88 | 2.14 | 2.05 | 2.87 | 1.95 | 2.07 | 2.32 |
| 10 | 1.08 | 1.79 | 1.28 | 1.58 | 1.53 | 1.73 | 2.08 | 1.67 | 2.04 | 1.92 |
| 11 | .93 | .97 | 1.17 | 1.65 | 1.11 | .73 | .88 | 1.34 | 1.81 | 1.10 |
| $\bar{X}$ | 1.17 | 1.47 | 1.39 | 1.72 | 1.46 | 1.27 | 1.59 | 1.55 | 1.80 | 1.56 |

Subtest 1 - Verbal-pictorial association
2 - Language perception
3 - Comprehension
4 - Vocabulary

TABLE IV

GRADE LEVEL EQUIVALENCIES, READING ACHIEVEMENT

GAIN SCORE DIFFERENCES FOR FIRST GRADE

STUDENTS IN 1969-70 AND 1970-71

| School | READING EMPHASIS SCHOOLS | | | | | CONTROL SCHOOLS | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | SUBTESTS | | | | | SUBTESTS | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | T | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | T |
| 1 | .41 | .60 | .06 | .32 | .34 | .20 | .10 | .11 | .07 | .14 |
| 2 | .03 | .29 | .31 | .11 | .27 | .66 | .40 | .46 | .20 | .41 |
| 3 | 1.19 | .91 | .67 | .41 | .82 | .14 | .10 | .72 | .50 | .34 |
| 4 | .65 | .64 | .52 | .25 | .46 | .01 | .09 | .04 | .19 | .03 |
| 5 | .29 | .32 | .07 | -0- | .28 | .37 | .39 | .72 | .43 | .38 |
| 6 | .34 | .70 | .15 | .12 | .34 | .37 | .57 | .19 | .14 | .29 |
| 7 | .72 | .74 | .13 | .01 | .51 | .11 | .10 | .03 | .06 | .07 |
| 8 | .32 | .46 | .24 | .62 | .31 | .04 | .03 | .12 | .32 | .04 |
| 9 | .58 | .55 | .51 | .44 | .40 | .05 | .30 | .04 | -0- | .08 |
| 10 | 1.50 | 1.44 | .75 | .76 | 1.09 | .38 | .48 | .36 | .27 | .36 |
| 11 | .08 | .13 | .18 | .25 | .09 | .10 | .26 | .06 | .20 | .14 |
| $\bar{X}$ | .66 | .78 | .37 | .28 | .54 | .21 | .18 | .17 | .14 | .18 |

Subtest 1 - Verbal-pictorial association
2 - Language perception
3 - Comprehension
4 - Vocabulary

The second objective, to have scores significantly higher than the control group, was achieved for two of the subtests, verbal-pictorial association and language perception, and for the total score. These differences were significant at the .05 level of probability. The remaining two subtests, comprehension and vocabulary, did not show a significant difference although the scores from the Reading Emphasis Program were higher in both cases.

The third objective dealt with gain scores and the extent to which they differed in the Reading Emphasis and Control schools. It should be noted that these gain scores are not for the same children from one school year to the next, but a comparison of the scores achieved in the given schools with last year's first graders with this year's first graders. Table III contains the reading scores as grade level equivalencies for the first grade classrooms for the year 1969-70. These scores were then subtracted from the data collected for 1970-71 and the resulting gains are presented in Table IV.

The gains as presented strongly favor the Reading Emphasis Program with significant differences existing between the groups in all subtests and the total score at the .05 level or better. The first and second subtests and the total score gains were significant at the .01 level.

Arithmetic Scores

While there were no objectives in the Reading Emphasis Program relating to arithmetic scores, concern was expressed that arithmetic may suffer as a result of the concentrated efforts in reading. Historically, students in the school district have been achieving at a higher level in arithmetic than in reading. As a point of interest, Table V is included to show the grade level equivalencies in arithmetic for the years, 1969-70 and 1970-71. The total arithmetic score only is presented.

Again, it should be mentioned that these scores are not the progression of two years for the same group of children, but rather the end-of-year achievement scores by the first grade classes in 1969-70, and by first grade classes in 1970-71 in the same schools representing the Reading Emphasis and control groups.

As evidenced by the data, arithmetic achievement did not suffer as a result of reading emphasis. It was the conclusion of those involved in the program that the attention to detail required of phonetic reading programs, and the more individualized attention to students produced carry-over effects to other subject-matter areas.

INTERIM EVALUATION, 1970-1971

The first year of the Reading Emphasis Program was an unqualified success in terms of achievement expectancies and grade level equivalency scores, both as compared with a control group and with last years achievement results.

The Evaluation Report recommended continuation and expansion of the program. Math shared the benefits of the program as evidenced by the higher scores achieved by the Reading Emphasis children over a control group and over previous years' achievement.

CONTINUATION OF THE PROGRAM 1971-1975

During the second year, the Reading Emphasis Program was continued in the original eleven schools. The reading consultants worked in much the same way as they did during the previous year, but the level of concentrated effort became the second grade. The consultants met with the first grade teachers as frequently as possible in planning sessions to maintain the program at that level.

TABLE V

THE TOTAL ARITHMETIC GRADE LEVEL EQUIVALENCY SCORES FOR

1969-70 AND 1970-71

| | READING EMPHASIS | | | CONTROL | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1969-70 | 1970-71 | Gain | 1969-70 | 1970-71 | Gain |
| 1 | 1.91 | 2.20 | .29 | 1.58 | 1.73 | .15 |
| 2 | 1.10 | 1.39 | .29 | 1.63 | 2.04 | .41 |
| 3 | 1.20 | 1.92 | .72 | 2.13 | 2.43 | .30 |
| 4 | 1.94 | 2.16 | .22 | 1.70 | 1.96 | .26 |
| 5 | 2.23 | 2.53 | .30 | 1.53 | 1.69 | .16 |
| 6 | 1.88 | 1.99 | .11 | 1.71 | 2.05 | .34 |
| 7 | 1.39 | 1.74 | .35 | 1.40 | 1.46 | .06 |
| 8 | 1.79 | 1.90 | .11 | 1.70 | 1.75 | .05 |
| 9 | 2.15 | 2.78 | .63 | 2.32 | 2.16 | .16 |
| 10 | 1.91 | 2.67 | .76 | 1.99 | 2.24 | .25 |
| 11 | 1.38 | 1.86 | .48 | 1.13 | 1.51 | .38 |
| $\bar{X}$ | 1.72 | 2.11 | .39 | 1.71 | 1.91 | .20 |

New schools were added to the program during the next school year. The consultants were assigned to the new schools and, once again, concentrated their efforts at the first grade level. Consultant services were provided to the original Reading Emphasis schools on a less intensive basis. By the end of the 1973-1974 school year, when the consultants were concentrating their efforts at the second grade level at the second group of schools, the Reading Emphasis Program had reached thirty-one elementary schools in Corpus Christi.

The Reading Emphasis Program was extended into the Intermediate and Advanced levels of the elementary schools in 1973. The Reading Center for Teacher Education funded by Title III Elementary and Secondary Education Act, was founded on the philosophy that the teacher is the essential ingredient in the classroom situation. Competency-based individualized inservice for teachers and principals and training of community volunteers to tutor in the schools are the two primary goals of the center.

Reading team leaders, grades 3-7, attend eight one-half day sessions each year. A diagnostic test is administered at the beginning of the year. After examining the results of these tests, teachers select specific areas in which they wish to work. Individual prescriptions for the year's sessions are then written by the staff. Activities are provided to develop competency in

- knowledge of reading skills
- varied techniques for the teaching of reading skills
- diagnostic and prescriptive techniques
- classroom management

Elementary principals attend four sessions a year which attempt to improve their knowledge of reading skills and methodology as it relates to his role of instructional leader. Sessions center on:

- locating strong points in a teacher's reading program
- recognizing specific teaching strategies related to reading skills
- selecting different instruments and strategies to aid in the grouping of pupils
- recognizing effective ways to use basal readers
- recognizing different strategies designed to enhance teacher-pupil relationship
- selecting operational plans for Media Centers

Training sessions for community volunteers are conducted for two hours a day for six days and includes activities in the areas of human relations, language experience approach, kindergarten pre-reading and reading skills, and questioning techniques.

Evaluation of the program continued and a Reading Emphasis Program Evaluation Report was issued in June, 1974. The evaluation sought answers to two questions of interest:

- At the end of grade one, did pupils achieve in reading, on the average, at or above the national norms?

- Were the achievement levels attained in grade one maintained, with respect to appropriate norms, as pupils progressed through the elementary grades?

Product data were in the form of total reading scores from the SRA Assessment Survey which were obtained as a part of the regular testing program of the district. These tests were administered by the classroom teachers themselves. The analysis was essentially descriptive. No comparison groups were utilized. No statistical tests of significance were computed. And there were no controls for mobility.

EVALUATION RESULTS

The first question of interest may be answered affirmatively on the basis of data reported in each of the appendices. Appendix A reports mean readiness and achievement scores for first grade pupils in each participating school for 1973-74. Of the thirty-one schools, fifteen reported mean readiness scores below the national norm of 54.5 (50%-ile). The average score for the entire group was slightly above the national norm ($\overline{RS}$ = 55.1, 51%-ile). At the end of the year, five of the thirty-one schools reported mean reading achievement scores below the national norm of 1.8 (50%-ile), and the average score for the total group was 2.1 (60%-ile).

Similar results are reported in each of the other appendices. From Appendix B, it can be observed that first grade pupils in the thirty schools participating during the 1972-73 school year began the year slightly below the national norm in readiness with a mean score of 50.3 (41%-ile), but ended the year at the national norm with a mean achievement score of 1.8 (50%-ile). Appendices C and D report similar results for first grade pupils in the original eleven Reading Emphasis schools during the first (1970-71) and second (1971-72) years of the program.

Question Two may be answered on the basis of data reported in Appendices B, C, and D. From each set of data, it can be observed that mean scores were maintained relative to national norms at the end of grade two. However, as indicated in Appendix C, achievement levels were not maintained relative to national norms in grades three and four. At the end of grade three, the total group mean was 3.6 (47%-ile) compared to a national norm of 3.8 (50%-ile). At the end of grade four, the observed mean was 4.5 (42%-ile) with a national norm of 4.8 (50%-ile).

These results represent some gain over recent years. For example, a study of reading test results for the original eleven schools using data for pupils who entered first grade in 1968, prior to the initiation of this program, indicated that mean scores were below norms at every grade. By the end of grade three, the mean reading score was less than 3.3 (35%-ile). Therefore, it can be observed that some longitudinal gains appear to have accrued, but the program objective has not been met beyond the primary grades.

SUMMARY

The Reading Emphasis Program has operated for four school years, and has expanded from the original eleven schools to serve thirty-one schools during 1973-74. Test results indicate that the program objective is being attained in the primary grades. Improvement in achievement scores has been evidenced in grades three and four. While not yet at the national norms, the total group mean of students at this level has risen since the initiation of these programs. The third grade students at the eleven original Reading Emphasis schools had a mean reading score of 3.6 (47%-ile) when tested in May, 1973.

Appendix A

READING EMPHASIS PROGRAM

Fourth Year (1973-74)
Second Group of Pupils in Expanded Group of Schools

| School | Begin Grade 1 | End Grade 1 |
|---|---|---|
| | $\overline{RS}$ Total Metro. Readiness, Form A 9/73 | $\overline{GE}$ Reading SRA, Primary I, Form E 5/74 |
| 1 | 48 | 2.1 |
| 2 | 49 | 1.5 |
| 3 | 61 | 3.0 |
| 4 | 50 | 1.5 |
| 5 | 52 | 1.4 |
| 6 | 45 | 2.0 |
| 7 | 68 | 2.6 |
| 8 | 64 | 2.1 |
| 9 | 47 | 1.7 |
| 10 | 54 | 2.3 |
| 11 | 57 | 1.9 |
| 12 | 61 | 2.4 |
| 13 | 59 | 2.0 |
| 14 | 47 | 2.0 |
| 15 | 60 | 2.0 |
| 16 | 46 | 1.9 |
| 17 | 41 | 1.9 |
| 18 | 57 | 2.2 |
| 19 | 60 | 2.1 |
| 20 | 49 | 1.8 |
| 21 | 60 | 3.0 |

Fourth Year (1973-74)
Second Group of Pupils in Expanded Group of Schools (Continued)

| School | Begin Grade 1 | End Grade 1 |
|---|---|---|
| | $\overline{RS}$ Total Metro. Readiness, Form A 9/73 | $\overline{GE}$ Reading SRA, Primary I, Form E 5/74 |
| 22 | 52 | 2.2 |
| 23 | 78 | 2.8 |
| 24 | 52 | 2.1 |
| 25 | 56 | 2.1 |
| 26 | 43 | 1.7 |
| 27 | 53 | 2.2 |
| 28 | 70 | 2.9 |
| 29 | 64 | 2.3 |
| 30 | 72 | 3.3 |
| 31 | 47 | 1.8 |
| Total | 55.1<br>51%-ile | 2.1<br>60%-ile |
| National Norms | 54.5<br>50%-ile | 1.8<br>50%-ile |

Appendix B

READING EMPHASIS PROGRAM

Expanded Group of Thirty Schools
First Group

| School | Begin Grade 1 | End Grade 1 | End Grade 2 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | $\overline{RS}$ Total Metro. Readiness, Form A 9/72 | $\overline{GE}$ Reading SRA, Primary I, Form E 5/73 | $\overline{GE}$ Reading SRA, Primary II, Form E 5/74 |
| 1 | 42 | 1.7 | 2.7 |
| 2 | 44 | 1.7 | 2.6 |
| 3 | 59 | 2.8 | 3.9 |
| 4 | 37 | 1.6 | 2.8 |
| 5 | 48 | 1.6 | 2.2 |
| 6 | 44 | 2.0 | 2.7 |
| 7 | 61 | 2.9 | 3.4 |
| 8 | 62 | 1.8 | 3.3 |
| 9 | 45 | 1.8 | 2.9 |
| 10 | 43 | 1.9 | 3.0 |
| 11 | 53 | 2.6 | 3.9 |
| 12 | 56 | 2.1 | 3.3 |
| 13 | 43 | 1.6 | 2.4 |
| 14 | 50 | 2.0 | 3.4 |
| 15 | 48 | 1.8 | 2.8 |
| 16 | 39 | 1.7 | 2.5 |
| 17 | 53 | 2.2 | 3.3 |
| 18 | 50 | 2.0 | 3.2 |
| 19 | 44 | 1.6 | 3.1 |
| 20 | 59 | 2.9 | 3.9 |
| 21 | 48 | 2.0 | 2.7 |

Expanded Group of Thirty Schools
First Group (Continued)

| School | Begin Grade 1 | End Grade 1 | End Grade 2 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | $\overline{RS}$ Total Metro. Readiness, Form A 9/72 | $\overline{GE}$ Reading SRA, Primary I, Form E 5/73 | $\overline{GE}$ Reading SRA, Primary II, Form F 5/74 |
| 22 | 73 | 2.4 | 4.0 |
| 23 | 46 | 1.8 | 2.6 |
| 24 | 62 | 2.2 | 3.4 |
| 25 | 42 | 1.7 | 2.4 |
| 26 | 48 | 1.9 | 2.7 |
| 27 | 70 | 3.0 | 3.9 |
| 28 | 61 | 2.7 | 3.6 |
| 29 | 62 | 2.7 | 3.7 |
| 30 | 46 | 1.8 | 2.7 |
| Total | 50.3<br>41%-ile | 1.8<br>50%-ile | 2.9<br>52%-ile |
| National Norms | 54.5<br>50%-ile | 1.8<br>50%-ile | 2.8<br>50%-ile |

Appendix C

READING EMPHASIS PROGRAM

Original Eleven Reading Emphasis Schools
First Group of Reading Emphasis Pupils

| School | Begin Grade 1 | End Grade 1 | End Grade 2 | End Grade 3* | End Grade 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | $\overline{RS}$ Total Metro. Readiness Form A 9/70 | $\overline{GE}$ Reading SRA, Level 1-2, Form C 5/71 | $\overline{GE}$ Reading SRA, Level 2-4, Form D 5/72 | $\overline{GE}$ Reading SRA, Level 2-4, Form C 5/73 | $\overline{GE}$ Reading SRA Multilevel (Blue), Form E 5/74 |
| 1 | 62.6 | 2.13 | 3.48 | 4.1 | 5.4 |
| 2 | 41.7 | 1.34 | 2.09 | 2.6 | 3.3 |
| 3 | 39.1 | 1.88 | 3.12 | 2.9 | 3.7 |
| 4 | 53.3 | 2.04 | 2.99 | 3.5 | 4.9 |
| 5 | 44.7 | 1.79 | 2.06 | 3.3 | 4.0 |
| 6 | 54.9 | 1.89 | 3.15 | 3.7 | 4.6 |
| 7 | 54.0 | 1.86 | 3.15 | 3.4 | 4.0 |
| 8 | 56.7 | 1.79 | 2.73 | 3.8 | 4.8 |
| 9 | 74.8 | 2.54 | 4.32 | 5.1 | 6.0 |
| 10 | 59.8 | 2.62 | 3.88 | 4.0 | 5.1 |
| 11 | 35.3 | 1.42 | 1.89 | 2.5 | 3.4 |
| Total | 51.9<br>44%-ile | 1.93<br>60%-ile | 2.98<br>59%-ile | 3.6<br>47%-ile | 4.5<br>42%-ile |
| National Norms | 54.5<br>50%-ile | 1.80<br>50%-ile | 2.80<br>50%-ile | 3.8<br>50%-ile | 4.8<br>50%-ile |

* For comparison, the third grade pupils in these schools averaged 3.49 (GE) in reading in May '72 and the district average was 3.46 that year.

Appendix D

READING EMPHASIS PROGRAM

Original Eleven Reading Emphasis Schools
Second Group of Reading Emphasis Pupils

| School | Begin Grade 1 | End Grade 1 | End Grade 2 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | $\overline{RS}$ Total Metro. Readiness, Form A 9/71 | $\overline{GE}$ Reading SRA, Level 1-2, Form C 5/72 | $\overline{GE}$ Reading SRA, Primary II, Form F 5/73 |
| 1 | 60.1 | 1.89 | 3.5 |
| 2 | 41.7 | 1.56 | 2.3 |
| 3 | 42.6 | 2.02 | 2.7 |
| 4 | 53.1 | 2.27 | 3.4 |
| 5 | 39.7 | 1.63 | 2.5 |
| 6 | 37.8 | 1.79 | 3.3 |
| 7 | 41.2 | 2.12 | 3.0 |
| 8 | 57.5 | 2.04 | 3.3 |
| 9 | 70.7 | 2.91 | 4.8 |
| 10 | 56.1 | 3.16 | 3.8 |
| 11 | 42.6 | 1.70 | 2.3 |
| Total | 47.9<br>36%-ile | 2.13<br>65%-ile | 3.1<br>55%-ile |
| National Norms | 54.5<br>50%-ile | 1.80<br>50%-ile | 2.8<br>50%-ile |